Chapter 11

Environmental Mitigation Policies

The RWSP environmental mitigation policies are intended to guide King County in developing mitigation measures for environmental impacts from the construction and operation of its regional wastewater facilities. The policies recognize that construction and operation of these essential facilities can cause impacts to nearby neighbors and confirm the county's pledge to be a good neighbor. The policies also reinforce the county's responsibility to conduct environmental reviews consistent with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and to carry out mitigation measures to address the specific impacts identified in an environmental review.

The goal of the environmental mitigation policies is for the county to construct regional facilities that enhance the quality of life in the region and in the local community. They call for the county to work with affected communities in the development of mitigation measures. They also require the county to mitigate the short-term and long-term impacts of its wastewater facilities on the communities in which the facilities are located.

This chapter provides an overview on implementation of the RWSP environmental mitigation policies from 2004 through 2006. There were no amendments to these policies in 2004–2006.

The complete text of all the environmental mitigation policies and a summary of how each policy was implemented in 2004–2006 are provided in Appendix J.

11.1 Implementation of Environmental Mitigation Policies from 2004 through 2006

11.1.1 Identifying and Incorporating Mitigation Measures Consistent with the State Environmental Policy Act

RWSP environmental mitigation policies (EMP) call for the county's mitigation process to be consistent with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). In addition, EMP-2 calls for mitigation measures identified through SEPA to be incorporated into design plans and construction contracts.

King County routinely seeks ways to mitigate adverse impacts at each stage of a project. WTD's environmental planning group is responsible for ensuring the division complies with state and federal Environmental Policy Acts (SEPA and NEPA) and the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

WTD's environmental planners prepare SEPA checklists that include mitigation measures for a project's potential environmental impacts. The planners also review project construction plans and specifications to ensure the mitigation measures identified in the checklists are included in these documents.

During construction and operation, proven methodologies, including best management practices and careful monitoring, are used to protect the environment. Typical mitigation measures for WTD projects are as follows:

- Temporary erosion and sedimentation control measures to prevent pollution of water bodies during project construction; typical measures include filter fabric fences, hay bales, and use of settling tanks
- Measures to avoid or control ground settlement from construction dewatering; such measures could include limiting dewatering to the area and depth necessary for construction, recharging groundwater, or freezing the soil
- Dust control measures, such as watering construction areas to wet bare soils and cleaning roadways around the construction area
- Monitoring of construction-related vibrations and, if necessary, modifying construction activities to prevent damage to nearby structures
- Measures to minimize noise, such as using mufflers or sound barriers, locating pumps and motors below ground level, strategically placing walls and landscaping
- Actions to minimize light and glare, such as angling light in the direction of work or shielding to reduce glare
- Best management practices and other measures to prevent pollution of water bodies, such as monitoring and treating dewatering water and restoring disturbed areas
- Landscaping and architectural treatments to help the facility blend into surrounding area
- Traffic control measures and parking plans, such as the use of flaggers, minimizing truck traffic during rush hours, developing traffic control plans

Definitions of State Environmental Policy Act terms

SEPA is a state law (RCW 43.21C) that requires state and local agencies to consider the likely environmental consequences of a proposal before approving or denying the proposal.

SEPA rules describe how SEPA is to be implemented (Chapter 197-11 WAC).

Threshold Determination is the decision by an agency's SEPA responsible official on whether or not a proposal will have significant environmental impacts.

DNS is a threshold determination that a proposal will not have significant environmental impacts, so an EIS is not required.

DS is a threshold determination that a proposal will have significant environmental impacts, so an EIS is required.

EIS is a detailed report on the potential significant environmental impacts of a proposal and alternatives. It also describes possible mitigation measures that would minimize these impacts.

SEPA Checklist is a form provided in the SEPA rules to help agencies make threshold determinations. The form asks for information on how the proposed project could affect various elements of the environment. A completed SEPA checklist usually accompanies a DNS and sometimes accompanies a DS.

The planners also prepare or oversee preparation of SEPA documents, such as determinations of non-significance (DNS) and environmental impact statements (EIS), as well as NEPA and ESA documents. In 2004–2006, WTD issued 28 wastewater facilities-related SEPA documents (Table 11-1).

Table 11-1. SEPA Documents Prepared by Wastewater Treatment Division in 2004-2006

Project	SEPA Document Prepared	Issue Date
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Final EIS Addendum No. 1	1/27/2004
Juanita Bay Pump Station Replacement Project	DNS	2/11/2004
Barton Street Pump Station Emergency Generator Project	DNS	2/25/2004
Hidden Lake Pump Station Replacement and Sewer Improvement Project	DNS	3/24/2004
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Final EIS Addendum No. 2	4/2/2004
Murray Avenue Pump Station Emergency Generator Installation and Odor Control System Upgrade Project	DNS	4/6/2004
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Final EIS Addendum No. 3	4/30/2004
Densmore Stormwater System Improvements	DNS	5/28/2004
Carnation Wastewater Treatment Facility	Draft EIS	6/28/2004
West Point Treatment Plant Solids Handling and Odor Control Improvements	DNS	7/21/2004
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Final EIS Addendum No. 4	9/1/2004
Carnation Wastewater Treatment Facility	Final EIS	10/15/2004
Hidden Lake Pump Station Replacement and Sewer Improvement	DNS Addendum	1/31/2005
Vashon Treatment Plant Upgrade Project	DNS Addendum	2/8/2005
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Draft Supplemental EIS	4/11/2005
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Final Supplemental EIS	7/19/2005
Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System	Notice of Action taken	8/11/2005
Bellevue Pump Station Upgrade	DNS	9/19/2005
53rd Avenue Pump Station Upgrade Project	DNS	11/22/05
West Point Odor Improvements	DNS	3/21/06
South Plant Odor Improvements	DNS	3/24/06
Sweyolocken Outfall Maintenance Project	DNS	4/21/06
Hollywood Facility Improvements Project	DNS	4/28/06
South Treatment Plant New Administration Building	DNS	5/9/06
Brandon Outfall Repair Project	DNS	8/24/06
King Street Odor Control Project	DNS	9/18/06
Barton Street Pump Station Upgrade Project	DNS	9/28/06
Carnation Wastewater Treatment Facility	Final EIS Addendum	11/15/06

In 2004, WTD also issued the Biological Assessment for the Brightwater Treatment System and obtained approval of the project under ESA Section 7.

11.1.2 Working with Affected Communities to Develop Mitigation Measures

A cornerstone of the RWSP environmental mitigation policies is ensuring the participation of affected communities in developing mitigation measures. The policies also direct that such measures be reasonable in terms of cost and magnitude as measured against severity and duration of impact. RWSP Environmental Mitigation Policy (EMP)-4 confirms the county's goal is to construct regional wastewater facilities that enhance the quality of life in the region and local community.

WTD works with local jurisdictions, affected residents and businesses, and permitting and regulatory agencies during the planning, environmental review, design, and construction of its projects to develop mitigation measures and ensure its facilities are good neighbors. Examples of mitigation-related activities that occurred in 2004–2006 are as follows:

- **Brightwater System**. In December 2005, the county completed a Brightwater systemwide mitigation package. The package is the result of many meetings with the public and negotiations with jurisdictions, tribal governments, and permitting agencies. The measures in the systemwide package will help reduce Brightwater's impacts, protect the quality of life in communities hosting Brightwater facilities, and ensure that this new treatment system is a good neighbor. Some of the mitigation addresses the short-term impacts of construction; other measures are intended to cover long-term impacts, such as the visible impacts that facilities like the treatment plant will have on the community landscape. In addition, the northern 43 acres of the treatment plant site are being redeveloped as a restored and enhanced salmon habitat and reforestation area that will include publicly accessible open space.
- **Hidden Lake Pump Station/Boeing Creek Trunk Sewer Project.** This project is located in the City of Shoreline. King County and the city worked together on an agreement that includes mitigation measures related to transportation management, odor control, landscaping, and temporary park access during project construction. The agreement also includes stormwater and water quality improvements at Shoreview/Boeing Creek Park, a restoration and park access plan for Richmond Beach Saltwater Park; and a pavement restoration plan and pedestrian pathway along the route of the sewer pipe. In addition, based on public input, the county adjusted the design features of the Hidden Lake Pump Station to meet community concerns and ensure that the facility fits into its residential setting. Adjustments include increasing the roof pitch, using landscaping for aesthetics and screening and building materials such as tile roof and earth tones for the exterior.

  To minimize community impacts, the county is also coordinating with the Ronald Wastewater District and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to make improvements to local sewer and water lines in coordination with this project. These include replacing and

constructing new manholes and sewer pipes for the Ronald district, and replacing about 5,000 feet of water mains for SPU.

- **Juanita Bay Pump Station Replacement Project.** Mitigation measures during construction of this project include building sound walls on the portions of the site that are near apartment buildings and condominiums, implementing temporary erosion and sediment control measures, and implementing traffic control measures. In response to community concerns and comment, the proposed design for the Juanita Bay Pump Station reduces the building mass to preserve views from neighboring properties and includes landscaping for aesthetics and screening. In addition, the facility will include sustainable "green-building" elements.

The policies also recognize the long-term impacts of constructing new regional treatment plants and major expansions of existing regional plants. RWSP EMP-5 provides direction on the mitigation associated with Brightwater and the future expansion of South plant—that such mitigation is at least 10 percent of the project costs or a cumulative of ten million dollars for each plant, whichever is greater, provided that the mitigation is consistent with all applicable local, state, and federal restrictions and laws. The Brightwater systemwide mitigation package meets this threshold.